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## The Rescue of Jerusalem: a view from the Nile valley

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The fundamental thesis of *The Rescue of Jerusalem* is that it was the intervention of an Egyptian-Kushite army that proved decisive in causing the Assyrian king Sennacherib to lift his siege of Jerusalem in 701 BC and return east. This is argued on the basis of the interpretation of data provided by the Old Testament and Assyrian records, rather than anything from Egypt or Nubia – for the very good reason that no material has yet been found there that can be associated with that campaign. The only possible exception has been a pair of texts (on stelae from the site of Kawa in Nubia – fig. 1) in which the later-king Taharqa looks back on a time in his princely years when he came north “as a youth” from Kush to Egypt with a force of recruits to join King Shabatako.<sup>1</sup> While some have suggested that this was part of preparations for the 701 campaign, there is nothing in the text itself to link the text with the events in question and, as will be discussed below, it now seems that it refers to an occasion at least a decade prior to 701. **[INSERT FIG. 1 NEAR HERE]**

However, even if it *had* referred to preparations for the 701 campaign, it would have said nothing about the impact and effectiveness of the force once it arrived in Palestine, making it very difficult for an Egyptologist to take an informed view of the role that the Egyptian-Kushite force played. All that one can do is to consider the credibility of the implications of some of *Rescue*’s arguments as far as Egypt and Kush are concerned.

Most modern commentators have taken a negative view of the effectiveness of the Egyptian-Kushite forces, with many quoted in Chapter 14 of *Rescue*. However, in no case are such comments based on any unequivocal data; indeed, in most cases they seem ultimately to be a (conscious or otherwise) echoing of an implicitly racist “received wisdom” originating in the late 19th century AD, through whose lens what little ancient material with any bearing

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<sup>1</sup> Kawa Stela IV (Khartoum, Sudan National Museum 2678), l. 7–9, v (Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek ÆIN 1712), l.13–14 (T. Eide, T. Hägg, R. Holton-Pierce and L. Török [eds], *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum: textual sources for the history of the Middle Nile region between the eighth century BC and the sixth century AD*, I [Bergen: Klassisk institutt, Universitetet i Bergen, 1994], 139, 153). For this interpretation, see (e.g.) K.A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period (1100–650 B.C.)*, 3rd edition (Warmister: Aris & Phillips, 1986), 154–5; 383–6; 557; 584–5.,

on the events is viewed (cf. *Rescue*, Chapter 19). In contrast, *Rescue*, suggests that the 25th Dynasty possessed "one of the strongest, probably the strongest – army in Egypt for many centuries" (p. 74), "[p]ossibly ... even the strongest army in the entire history of Egypt" (p. 323 n.85).

Given that nothing is known about the numbers or composition of the Egyptian-Kushite army, such positive views are just as lacking in contemporary objective evidence as the negative assessments. Indeed, there is potentially a danger of circular reasoning: *if* the Egyptian-Kushite army had defeated the hitherto-invincible Assyrians, it *must* therefore have been a force of exceptional quality. In any case, it seems excessive to suggest that it could have exceeded the strength of the Egyptian armies of the 18th Dynasty, which had been built up through decades of wide-ranging warfare and were supported by an economy that was probably the strongest ever possessed by Egypt – underpinned by the natural resources (especially gold) of Kush (then an integral province of Egypt), which had also provided important elements of the imperial army.

On the other hand, in comparison with the immediately preceding centuries (since the late 12th century BC), Egypt and Kush were in 701 once again under a single overlord (although the local kinglets of the preceding century still existed), and thus likely to be a more efficient entity – with the Nubian goldfields once more able to directly underpin the economy and allow the diversion of more resources to the military. Indeed, the civil wars that had plagued Egypt during the later 9th and 8th centuries may have provided a larger reservoir of Egyptians with military experience than had been the case at any time since the New Kingdom, with the possible exception of the brief flowering of Egyptian military power under Shoshenq I in the mid 10th century.<sup>2</sup>

The Kushites had also gained experience through Piankhy's campaign into northern Egypt and his successor's re-occupation of the same territory in the decades immediately preceding 701. The capabilities thus demonstrated doubtless built on the military activities that had allowed the Kingdom of Kush to expand out of its Upper Nubian heartland to such a degree that by the middle of the 8th century it embraced southern Egypt, including the Thebaid and the holy city of Thebes itself.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> When Jerusalem has been on the receiving end of Egyptian aggression; for a recent discussion of Shoshenq I's activities in Palestine, updating the picture noted in *Rescue*, see A. Dodson, *Afterglow of Empire: Egypt from the fall of the New Kingdom to the Saite Renaissance* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2012), 87–95.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Dodson, *Afterglow*, 139–54.

Taking both national elements together with an invigorated combined economy, there seems no reason to doubt that the Nile Valley could indeed have put together a more credible army than had been the case for a long time. Thus, while to suggest that the Egyptian-Kushite forces deployed in 701 was the 'strongest army in the entire history of Egypt' has to be dismissed as unjustifiable hyperbole, there is no reason to doubt that it could have been well-resourced, experienced and, if well-led, effective on the battlefield - even against the Assyrians. It should also be noted that an Egyptian-Kushite army was certainly able to repulse an Assyrian invasion of Egypt in 674, although subsequently defeated in 671 (but still able to regain control prior to a final Assyrian take-over in 664). It is also possible that the failure of Assyria to threaten Egypt for some two decades after 701 could have been a function of respect for Egyptian-Kushite military prowess displayed that year.

In this connection it is perhaps worth noting that by then it had been some time since the Assyrian army had come up against a true nation-state, with an extensive hinterland, rather than the much smaller, city-centred, polities of Syria-Palestine. The Egyptian-Kushite forces would also have had much shorter supply-lines than the Assyrians, now operating some 600 miles from their homeland, rather than the 150 miles that separated their opponents from the Nile delta.

The Old Testament states that the Egyptian-Kushite forces were led by "Tirhakah, King of Kush" - clearly the Taharqo who ruled from 690 to 664. As the campaign against Jerusalem is securely dated by Assyrian data to 701, this statement has led to various interpretations, including suggestions that there might have been a second campaign, unattested from the Assyrian/Biblical side, or that "Tirhakah", as the best-known Kushite king, was cited in error for the actual king ruling in 701. However, the general view has been for some time that "King of Kush" is simply a gloss, highlighting that the individual involved, while simply an army commander in 701, was the same man as the Taharqo who had gone on to become king; this still seems the best explanation. Nevertheless, many commentators have queried whether Taharqo was actually old enough to have exercised true operational control of the Egypto-Kushite army,<sup>4</sup> Rescue following the view that he was only twenty years old at the time, with others making him even younger.

It is important to note that the age of Taharqo in 701 is a direct function of broader reconstructions of the history of the Kushite royal family. This accordingly brings us to a point where we need to switch focus

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<sup>4</sup> See *Rescue*, 112-13.

to this particular topic, and explore the implications of a radical revision of the history of the 25th Dynasty that has been developing since 2013, and which has important consequences for the dynamics of the events of 701 and the immediately preceding decade.

It is worth underlining that prior to the accession of Taharqo in 690 BC, no events in Egyptian history can be unequivocally fixed in terms of years BC. Taharqo's accession date (and thus that of the death of his predecessor) is obtained by adding his unequivocal reign length<sup>5</sup> to the accession-year of his successor Psamtik I - which is the first Egyptian point in time solidly linked into the known chronology of the broader ancient world.<sup>6</sup> Before this, all dates depend on the view one takes of the range of variables that can interact to produce an estimated equivalent date-BC for a given Egyptian king's regnal year. These variables can include even the relative placement of individuals and events, since there are many cases where the extant data is equivocal in the extreme and can be legitimately read in contradictory ways. Accordingly, scholars can only formulate "working hypotheses" as to such matters, although these may, through the passage of time and lack of challenge become regarded, especially by non-specialists in the minutiae of Egyptian historiography, as "facts", in spite of the lack of any definitive proof. As there are no references in Egyptian sources to the events of 701, the identification of who was ruling in the Nile Valley at that time is accordingly entirely dependent on the "working hypothesis" one adopts for the decades preceding Taharqo's accession (fig. 2). **[INSERT FIG.2 NEAR HERE]**

In *Rescue*, the hypothesis adopted is that 701 fell during a 6-year coregency between Shabako and his eventual successor Shabatako. This order of succession enshrines an assumption, going back to the dawn of modern Egyptology, that these royal names were the respective hieroglyphic prototypes of the Greek forms "Sabacon" and "Sebichos", placed in that order by the 3rd century BC historian Manetho. The latter records that "Sabacon" defeated the Saite (24th Dynasty) king "Bocchoris" (Bakenrenef), an event which marked the unification of Egypt and Kush, and has been generally dated on the basis of broader Egyptian chronological calculations to the mid-710s ("c. 712" in *Rescue*). This is usually placed in Shabako's second year (as

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<sup>5</sup> Calculated from the lifespan of sacred bull Apis XXXVII, which died in Year 20 of Psamtik I at the age 21 years, 2 months and seven days, and had been born in Year 26 of King Taharqo.

<sup>6</sup> L. Depuydt, "Saite and Persian Egypt, 664 BC-332 BC (Dyns. 26-31, Psammetichus I to Alexander's Conquest of Egypt)," in E. Hornung, R. Krauss and D. Warburton (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Chronology*, HdO 83 (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 265-83.

both Year 6 of Bakenrenef and a year reported to Shabako's Year 2 are usually – but perhaps not correctly – attributed to the same burial in the Serapeum at Saqqara).<sup>7</sup> Since Shabako is known from contemporary texts to have reigned for a minimum of fifteen years, his reign would run down to the end of the eighth century (i.e. just before or just after 701).

On this basis, the succession of Shabatako was long placed at this point, giving him around a decade of reign (albeit unattested in contemporary records beyond his Year 3) before Taharqo's guaranteed accession in 690. However, the 1999 publication of an April 706-dated text of Sargon II of Assyria at Tang-i Var in Iran, which recorded that "Shapataku, ruler of the land of Meluḥḥa (Kush)" had sent the fugitive ruler of Ashdod, Iamani, in chains to the Assyrian king, upset this scheme. Since "Shapataku" could hardly be other than Shabatako, the beginning of his reign would be pushed back to 707 at the latest. A Shabako-to-Shabatako succession in or before 706 would mean that Shabako's minimum fifteen-year reign would begin in 722 at the latest – i.e. around a decade earlier than is usually allowed.

Given the direct and indirect consequences of such a change on the history of the 8th century (see further, below), many scholars sought to avoid it by arguing that the text actually indicated that in 706 Shabako and Shabatako were ruling together, either as formal coregents<sup>8</sup> or with the latter as some form of "viceroy", ruling Kush while Shabako was in Egypt.<sup>9</sup> Both options allowed the basic chronological structure to remain undisturbed, with the "coregency" version followed in *Rescue*.

Unfortunately, both of these "explanations" lack any independent verification and are replete with problems. Taking the second first, we have no evidence for any office of the kind implied by the "viceroy" theory, leaving aside the question of how/why an Assyrian king would be dealing with a subordinate of Shabako's, whose territory was separated from his by the Kingdom of Egypt, rather than Shabako himself, actually present in said

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<sup>7</sup> The stela of Shabako is only described verbally in A. Mariette, *Le Sérapeum de Memphis*, I (Paris: Vieweg, 1882), 184, and appears now to be lost; its date and name of the dedicated king cannot be verified. It may be noted that Mariette also notes a fragment bearing the remains of the prenomen of Shabatako in the same room as contained the 'Shabako' stela.

<sup>8</sup> E.g. D.B. Redford, as cited in *Rescue*, 323 n.87.

<sup>9</sup> As argued by Kitchen, "The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt: an overview of fact and fiction", in *The Libyan Period in Egypt: historical and cultural studies into the 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> Dynasties – Proceedings of a conference at Leiden University, 25–27 October 2007* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten), 163–64.

kingdom.<sup>10</sup>

As for the question of a formal coregency, there survives no material with double dates of Shabako and Shabatako, nor any representations of them acting together.<sup>11</sup> It should also be emphasised that, contrary to the impression generally given by Egyptologists, coregency (whereby a king associated his heir with him on the throne, with full kingly titles, and in some cases his own regnal years) was by no means a provably widely-used institution.

Although proposed for various pairings of kings in modern histories of ancient Egypt, on closer inspection most alleged cases of coregency turn out to ultimately be means of resolving apparent chronological conundra of the kind presented by the Tang-i Var evidence, rather than contemporary data left behind by the putative co-rulers – i.e. double-dating of texts, or representations of the protagonists acting together (rather than simply appearing separately on a wall or other monument).<sup>12</sup> During the 12th Dynasty (20th to 18th centuries BC), there is such evidence in the form of double-dates (although even these have been queried by some scholars). However, during the New Kingdom (16th to 11th centuries), there is actually only one wholly unequivocal example of a coregency, involving a female (Hatshepsut) acting alongside a male (Thutmose III), whom she had no normal prospect of succeeding (and whose regnal years she shared). There are also two further coregencies that seem highly likely, but both of these are also anomalous, each involving a co-ruler (one a female) apparently not in the direct line of succession, nor destined for ultimate independent rule (Smenkhkare and Neferneferuaten).<sup>13</sup> All other putative examples are based on subjective

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. K. Jansen-Winkel, "The Third Intermediate Period," in Hornung, Krauss and Warburton (eds), *Ancient Egyptian Chronology*, 258–59, *pace* Kitchen's protestations to the contrary (*Libyan Period in Egypt*, 163–64).

<sup>11</sup> Turin stela 1467, showing the two kings together, is undoubtedly a forgery (R. Morkot and S. Quirke, "Inventing the 25th Dynasty: Turin stela 1467 and the construction of history," in C.-B. Arnst, I. Hafemann and A. Lohwasser (eds), *Begegnungen: Antike Kulturen im Niltal. Festgabe für Erika Endesfelder, Karl-Heinz Priese, Walter Friedrich Reinecke, Steffen Wenig* [Leipzig: Wodtke und Stegbaue, 2001], 349–63).

<sup>12</sup> For a detailed discussion, see Dodson, "The Coregency Conundrum", *Kmt* 25/2 (2014), 28–35.

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of these individuals and their likely (albeit controversial) status, see Dodson, *Amarna Sunset: Nefertiti, Tutankhamun, Ay, Horemheb and the Egyptian Counter-Reformation* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2009), 27–52.

analysis of material that is all ultimately equivocal, or possibly even erroneous (e.g. a potentially miswritten date in the case of the proposed coregency between Thutmose III and Amenhotep II).

During the period leading up to Kushite rule, the only known true coregency (i.e. an anticipatory generational transition, not a case of kings of rival lines ruling in parallel, as was a feature of much of the Third Intermediate Period) is that between Osorkon III and Takelot III, attested by a clear father-son double-date (the only such double-date since the Middle Kingdom!). In contextualising this, one should note that at the time of this unique double-date, Osorkon III was in extreme old age, the coregency having been instituted after Osorkon had held senior positions for some six-and-a-half decades, and was thus probably a 'non-standard' arrangement driven by the practical circumstance of the elder king's senility, rather than supporting the idea that coregency was in any way a 'normal' matter.

On the basis of the foregoing, there should be a *prima facie* assumption *against* assuming the existence of a coregency in the absence of representations of rulers acting together or unequivocal double-dates, no matter how tempting the chronological and other drivers might be. Given that this alleged coregency of Shabako and Shabatako was only ever posited to "save" broader chronological assumptions, in the wake of the "Tang-i Var conundrum", it is methodologically unsound to make it the key underpinning of a working hypothesis for the 8th/7th century transition.

This seemingly left the unpalatable option of pushing Shabako's accession back to 722,<sup>14</sup> with donation stelae from the Delta showing that he was recognized in that region as early as his Years 2 through 6 (\*720-\*716). But, in spite of this, when Sargon II menaced Egypt in 716, it was not Shabako, but "Shilkanni, king of Egypt" (generally agreed to be Osorkon IV of Tanis) who dealt with the Assyrian, and appeased him through a gift of horses. Although it is clear that local kings still continued to exist around Egypt until the end of the reign of Taharqa, the absence of Shabako from an affair of such importance could be seen as very odd.

However, all of this depended on Shabako being Shabatako's predecessor, and in 2013 there appeared a new study that (inter alia) proposed the reversal of the order of the two reigns,<sup>15</sup> with further papers seconding the

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<sup>14</sup> For a reconstruction of the period on this basis, see Dodson, *Afterglow*, 139-68.

<sup>15</sup> M. Bányai, "Ein Vorschlag zur Chronologie der 25. Dynastie in Ägypten," *Journal of Egyptian History* 6 (2013), 46-129; "Die Reihenfolge der kuschitischen Könige," *Journal of Egyptian History* 8 (2015), 115-80. It



new view appearing the following years.<sup>16</sup> All recognized that neither Greek name in Manetho's chronicle, "Sabacon" nor "Sebichos", contained anything that supported the conventional order,<sup>17</sup> and explored the implications of switching the two kings around.

Regarding overall chronology, making Shabako the later of the two kings would make his known fifteen regnal years run from Taharqo's accession in 690 to 705. Not only would this square with the fourteen years given to "Sebichos" in Africanus' version of Manetho,<sup>18</sup> but would place the transition between the re-ordered reigns after 706, leaving no problem with taking Shabatako's appearance in the Tang-i Var inscription in that year as being an independent monarch. No regnal year higher than the third is known for Shabatako, but giving him the eight years of Africanus' version of Manetho would place his accession around 713, fitting perfectly with the conventional dating for the transition between Piankhy and his successor.

Looking at other material from the period, the reversal of Shabako and Shabatako also has positive results. First, the substructure of Shabatako's pyramid at El-Kurru is of a "cut and cover" type found only among the earliest Kushite royal tombs, including that of Piankhy, and has no trace of decoration. In contrast, Shabako's tomb has a tunnelled substructure - a type found in all later Kushite royal tombs - with traces of mythological texts, also as found in later royal tombs.<sup>19</sup> Thus, while the conventional

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should be noted that these papers make other proposals for the reconfiguration of the 25th Dynasty beyond simply reversing the order of Shabatako and Shabatako that are not consistent with the implications of the reversal as developed below.

<sup>16</sup> F. Payraudeau, "Retour sur la succession Shabako-Shabatako", *NeHeT* 1 (2014), 115-27; G.P.F. Broekman, "The order of succession between Shabaka and Shabatako; A different view on the chronology of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty," *Göttinger Miszellen* 245 (2015), 17-31; the following paragraphs summarize key points raised in these papers. J. Pope, writing in the present volume, pp. \*\*\*-\*\*, also takes a supportive position vis à vis this proposed reconfiguration.

<sup>17</sup> Indeed, Broekman, *Göttinger Miszellen* 245, 20 n.18, wondered whether the "n" at the end of the first name might derive from a misreading of a poorly-written Egyptian *t3*-sign as an *n* (both are horizontal signs), and thus could support "Sabakon" actually concealing the name Shabatako.

<sup>18</sup> Generally regarded as the least inaccurate of the surviving epitomes of Manetho's now-lost original work.

<sup>19</sup> For Kushite royal tombs, see Dodson, *The Royal Tombs of Ancient Egypt* (London: Pen & Sword, 2016), 114-16.

ordering of the kings requires an unexpected architectural regression under Shabatako, the reversal of the kings' order allows a more natural architectural progression to be observed.

Moving to epigraphic matters, Shabatako is not mentioned on the statue of Shabako's son, the high priest of Amun Horemakhet (fig. 3), although Shabako himself, Taharqo and Tanutamun are all included as kings whom Horemakhet served: unless Shabatako was in some way disgraced (for which there is no evidence whatsoever), this absence is very odd. Likewise, at the Small Temple at Medinet Habu, the pylon added during the 25th Dynasty (fig. 4) bears the names of Shabako and Taharqo only, suggesting that decoration began under Shabako and was continued under Taharqo: there is no indication of any hiatus under any intervening reign of Shabatako. **[INSERT FIGS. 3 & 4 NEAR HERE]**

A further piece of evidence is provided by the texts marking the annual height of the Nile inundation at Karnak, which are arranged in such a way that those of Shabatako would appear to have been carved before those of Shabako. Also at Karnak, in the temple of Osiris-Hegadjet (fig. 5), the God's Wife of Amun Shepenwepet I (daughter of Osorkon III) appears in a portion of the temple decorated under Shabatako, as does her successor, Amenirdis I. Under the normal ordering of kings, Shepenwepet I would be long-dead in these scenes, as Amenirdis I is known to have succeeded her as God's Wife by Year 12 of Shabako,<sup>20</sup> i.e. at least three years before Shabatako's assumed accession. If, on the other hand, Shabatako were the earlier king, Shepenwepet I would have been the incumbent God's Wife at his accession, with the probability that the decoration of the temple was underway at the time of Shepenwepet's replacement by the (Kushite) Amenirdis I,<sup>21</sup> explaining both ladies' presence there. **[INSERT FIG.5 NEAR HERE]**

Reversing the order of Shabako and Shabatako can thus be seen to resolve a range of issues, and while objections can be raised, none can be regarded as decisive.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, addressing them has in many cases actually produced further evidence supporting the revision.

In terms of Egypto-Assyrian relations, the new configuration leaves

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<sup>20</sup> Graffito in the Wadi Hammamat.

<sup>21</sup> The "Year 12" date is purely a *terminus ante quem*, and says nothing about when the transition between Shepenwepet I and Amenirdis I took place. Since Shepenwepet I had been in office since around 790, and was probably a mature woman at the time, her death around 710 under a re-ordered Shabatako is far more credible than it occurring a decade later under a conventionally-ordered Shabako.

<sup>22</sup> Summarized by Broekman, *Göttinger Miszellen* 245, 28-30.

Shilkanni/Osorkon IV's gift of horses in 716 well before the Kushite return to northern Egypt. The arrival of Iamani in the Nile Valley would coincide closely with Shabatako succeeding Piankhy<sup>23</sup> as the new king of Kush, when Kushite direct control extended no further north than the Thebaid.<sup>24</sup>

Iamani's arrival may have provided a catalyst for the new king to reverse Piankhy's decade-old apparent policy of maintaining no more than a distant suzerain relationship with the rulers of Egypt north of the Thebaid, under which relations with Asiatic powers had been implicitly left in the hands of these monarchs (e.g. Osorkon IV in 716). Given Assyrian expansionism, and the presence of a Palestinian fugitive at his court, Shabatako may have taken the view that the security of the Nile Valley was best secured by consolidating his power in the far north. It is known that Shabatako was physically in Thebes in his Year 3 and it may be that, having been formally crowned there as King of Egypt, he moved north, dethroned Bakenrenef and became the supreme ruler of the full length of a now-united kingdom of Egypt and Kush.<sup>25</sup>

This new status is likely to have been the occasion for Shabatako's change of Horus-name from "Strong-bull-appearing-in-Thebes" (citing part of the domain he had inherited from Piankhy, and perhaps even the latter's predecessor, Kashta), which he was using in Year 3, to the non-geographic "Enduring-of-appearances" that is found on undated, but probably later, monuments – including a statue found at Memphis and now in Cairo.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, Shabatako's original titulary is another point in favour of placing him before Shabako in the royal succession, as it follows the expansive minatory style of the kings of the imperial New Kingdom (and imitated by the far less powerful kings of the following Third Intermediate Period). In contrast, a simple archaising style that had started to be adopted during the middle of the eighth century by kings in Egypt-proper (e.g. by Shoshenq V of Tanis and Osorkon III<sup>27</sup> of Thebes) would be the universal mode employed by Shabako,

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<sup>23</sup> Probably as his son, given that Taharqo, definitely a son of Piankhy, refers to himself as one of Shabatako's brothers in his Kawa stelae.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Broekman's comments on Assyrian references to Iamani's flight (*Göttinger Miszellen* 245, 24–25).

<sup>25</sup> Although, as already noted, local dynasties, including some of kings, continued to exist in northern Egypt until the end of Kushite rule.

<sup>26</sup> CG 655 = JE 27852 (L. Borchardt, *Statuen und Statuetten von Königen und Privatleuten im Museum von Kairo, Nr. 1–1294*, III [Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1930], 2, pl. 121.

<sup>27</sup> It should be noted that *Rescue's* account of the internal affairs of Egypt prior to the advent of Kushite rule, which derives principally from

Taharqo, Tanutamun, and the subsequent kings of Egypt and Kush for some centuries. Shabatako's use of an "extended" Horus-name would thus be anomalous if he did indeed reign after Shabako.

On the basis of the reconfiguration of the reigns, Shabatako's preparation for the defeat of Bakenrenef is likely to have been the occasion when the future king Taharqo went "as a twenty year old recruit ... with His Majesty to Lower Egypt",<sup>28</sup> rather than in connection with the events of 701, as has often been proposed.<sup>29</sup> In this case, Taharqo's age in 701 would be raised to something around thirty - a more credible age for an army commander-in-chief, and dealing decisively with the issues noted on p. \*\*\*).

Another age-issue resolved by the reordering of Shabako and Shabatako concerns Tanwetamani, the son of Shabako and successor of Taharqo. On the conventional ordering, Tanwetamani would have come to the throne some forty years after his father's death; under the reversal, the gap would only have been the two-and-a-half decades of Taharqo's reign.

Shabako's background is not wholly clear. He is usually confidently called a son of Piankhy's predecessor, Kashta, on the basis of a now-lost inscription that is recorded as naming the God's Wife Amunirdis I as "King's Sister" of Shabako.<sup>30</sup> However, in Egyptian "sister" can refer to a more generalised female relative (even a wife), so this cannot be regarded as definitive evidence.<sup>31</sup> Manetho states that "Sabichos" was the son of "Sabakon", and with the re-identification of these kings, it is possible that Shabako was actually Shabatako's son, although it is perhaps more likely that he was a sibling - Shabako certainly married a daughter of Piankhy.<sup>32</sup>

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Kitchen's *Third Intermediate Period*, is now obsolete regarding its localization of the 23rd Dynasty and definition of its constituent kings; for an updated discussion, see Dodson, *Afterglow of Empire*, 114-38.

<sup>28</sup> Kawa stela V, l. 16-17 (Eide et al. [eds], *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum* I, 153).

<sup>29</sup> On the non-sequentiality of the Kawa narratives, cf. Broekman, *GM* 245, 28-30.

<sup>30</sup> Other texts include cartouches of Amenirdis's royal "brother", but all have been erased and are unreadable.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Broekman, *Göttinger Miszellen* 245, 30

<sup>32</sup> Against the idea of Shabako being a son of Shabatako is that Shabako would then be succeeded by his nephew (son of Piankhy) Taharqo, rather than by one of his sons (e.g. Horemakhet [p. \*\*\*, above] or the later king Tanwetamani). On the other hand, Kushite rules of succession remain obscure, and seem not to comprise simple male primogeniture, as was normal in Egypt. Rather, it is

The shifting of the reign of Shabako to a span of 705-690 makes perhaps less likely arguments that the seal-impressions bearing his image found at Nineveh (fig. 6)<sup>33</sup> [INSERT FIG. 6 NEAR HERE] should be dated prior to 701, and thus unrelated to that year's events.<sup>34</sup> However, the view that they derive from the sealing of some kind of peace-treaty, as espoused in *Rescue*, following many earlier authors, does not seem likely. There seems little doubt that the sealings derive from storage jars, the mud element matching the internal traces found on contemporary undoubted jar-closures,<sup>35</sup> in spite of the objections in *Rescue*.<sup>36</sup> On the other hand, the fact that these two examples bear both an Egyptian seal-impression and an Assyrian one suggests that whatever was once contained in the jar(s) was not a simple trade-item, the second impression implying some verification or approval of the contents by an Assyrian official present in Egypt at the time of packing.<sup>37</sup>

Accordingly, while the seal-impressions cannot be used to support the romantic idea of their being part of a physical peace agreement (which, to judge from other examples of ancient peace treaties, would have taken the form of an exchange of cuneiform tablets), they may well have formed part of a formal gift exchange that, given the key role played in the exchange of valuable goods in ancient diplomacy, might have accompanied an agreement between the two states. It should be noted that another fragment of Egyptian

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generally held by scholars that a king was succeeded first by his brothers, before shifting to the next generation: if Shabatako, Shabako and Taharqo were all brothers, this would work well, with the throne then going to Shabako's son Tanwetamani (presumably in the absence of any surviving son of Shabatako). For a discussion of the underlying issues of Kushite succession rules, see R. Morkot, "Kingship and Kinship in the Empire of Kush," in S. Wenig [ed.], *Studien zum antiken Sudan: Akten der 7. Internationalen Tagung für meroitische Forschungen vom 14. bis 19. September 1992 in Gosen/bei Berlin* [Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1999], 188-94.

<sup>33</sup> *Rescue*, 149-50; now British Museum WA 84527 and WA 84884.

<sup>34</sup> Noted in *Rescue*, 352 n.5.

<sup>35</sup> See W.M.F. Petrie, *Tanis II, Nebesheh (Am) and Defenneh (Tahpanhes)* (London: Egypt Exploration Fund, 1888), 72, pl. xxxvi[4].

<sup>36</sup> *Rescue*, 352 n.5, a statement apparently made without understanding the make-up of the sealing. Pope (this volume, \*\*\*) favors the idea that the marks derive from a cord closing a bag containing valuables.

<sup>37</sup> Pope (this volume, \*\*\*) puts forward the contrary view that the sealing was done in Assyria, with a resident Egyptian adding the Shabaka seal-impression.

seal-impression is known from Nineveh, giving the name "Menkheperre".<sup>38</sup> This was the prenomen of Thutmose III of the 15th century, the name of a Theban high priest of 11th century – and also a variant prenomen used by Piankhy. Given that Nineveh's prominence dates from Neo-Assyrian times, the latter seems the more likely ascription, thus providing evidence for some kind of exchange between Assyria and Kush some years before 701.

Whether there was a formal treaty in the wake of the events of 701 is a problematic question in the absence of any direct evidence, e.g. cuneiform tablets recording such (of which many exist around the ancient Levant), or a copy on an Egyptian temple wall (as survives from the 13th century Egyptian-Hittite treaty). One factor that might support such a thing is the fact that it was then over two decades before Assyria and Egypt once again came into conflict, following the deaths of both parties to a putative treaty (although, as noted above, p. \*\*\*, more practical issues of military balance might have been involved). However, any consideration of what such a treaty *might* have contained, as is set out in *Rescue*, pp. 150–54, can be no more than sheer speculation in the light of the lack of objective evidence, and *Rescue's* suggestion there that it might have been a multilateral agreement lacks any supporting parallels.

What, then, can one usefully conclude, from the Egyptian/Nubian point of view, about the thesis put forward in *Rescue*, particularly in light of the highly probable revision of the Kushite royal succession? Starting with a negative, the reversal of the order of Shabako and Shabatako removes the possibility that Prince Taharqo's journey with an army from Kush to Egypt might have been in preparation for the campaign of 701, thus deleting the one potential piece of Egyptian/Nubian data that could directly attest to it. On the other hand, the likely age of Taharqo in 701 is raised to around 30, making his position as head of the Egyptian-Kushite forces far more credible.

As for the strength and capability of those forces is concerned, the union of Egypt and Kush restored the economic basis of the military power of the glory days of the New Kingdom, while the endemic warfare in the Nile Valley over the preceding decades may well have provided a more martial pool of

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<sup>38</sup> British Museum WA 84526; cf. J. Pope, *The Double Kingdom under Taharqo: Studies in the History of Kush and Egypt c. 690–664 BC* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2014), 11, n. 39, and A. Lohwasser, "Zu den Men-Cheper-Ra-Skarabäen der 25. Dynastie", in J. Budka, R. Gundacker, Gabriele Pieke (eds), *Florilegium Aegyptiacum: Eine wissenschaftliche Blütenlese von Schülern und Freunden für Helmut Satzinger zum 75. Geburtstag am 21. Jänner 2013* (Göttingen: Göttinger Miszellen, Beihefte Nr. 14, 2013), 229–34.

manpower that might otherwise have been the case. On this basis, and the favourable strategic position of their home territory relative to the Palestinian theatre of operations, there seems no *prima facie* reason to question the ability of Egyptian-Kushite forces to have given a good account of themselves against the Assyrians. Accordingly, *Rescue's* proposal that it was the Egyptian-Kushite intervention that proved decisive in 701 seems a perfectly reasonable working hypothesis, even if not provable on the basis of extant data.

Regarding the dynamics behind the Egyptian-Kushite intervention, the revision of the royal succession clarifies the contrast between the policy of appeasement of the Assyrians implied by the extradition of Iamani in 706 and opposing them militarily in 701. The former will have been the act of Shabatako, who died shortly afterwards, and the latter directed by his successor Shabako. As to why this reversal of policy took place, we have no objective basis for assessment. On the other hand, one might posit a mixture of concern at the long-term efficacy of appeasement, coupled with a strengthening of Egyptian-Kushite military capability following a further half-decade's integration of economy and armies, which could have given Shabako more confidence in a positive outcome of a clash with the Assyrian army.

While this review of what we now seem to know about the Egyptian/Nubian end of the events of 701 thus fails to shed much additional light on what actually took place in Palestine, it does give some potential new insights into the Nilotic background. In doing so, it incidentally illustrates the fact that Egyptian history is far more malleable than is often appreciated by scholars working in adjacent regions, with "standard" reconstructions often obsolescent and/or incorporating far more subjective assumptions than may be warranted. Indeed, this factor concerning ancient history is by no means restricted to the Nile valley, and is but one of the factors that makes definitive conclusions about *what* happened in the past so elusive, let alone *why*. This of course makes such debates as those enshrined in *Rescue* frustrating – yet strangely stimulating!

### Captions

1. Part of the lunette of one of the two stelae from Kawa in which King Taharqo describes (inter alia) elements of his princely career, including bringing an army from Kush to Egypt for King Shabatako; the scene shows the king and his mother, Abar, offering to Amun. Kawa V = Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, EIN 1712 (author's photograph).
2. Comparative chronologies for Egypt during the 8th and early 7th centuries

(author's graphic).

3. Statuette of the High Priest of Amun, Horemakhet, son of Shabako; the text on the base names his father, Taharqo and Tanwetamani, but not Shabatako. From Karnak; Aswan, Nubian Museum, ex-Cairo CG 42204 = JE 38580 (author's photograph).
4. The 25th Dynasty pylon of the Small Temple at Medinet Habu; its original texts switch directly from Shabako to Taharqo (author's photograph).
5. The temple of Osiris-Heqadjet at Karnak, built by Osorkon III and Takelot III, and extended by Shabataqo, who is depicted on the façade. The king's cartouches - but not his Horus-name *serekh* - have been mutilated as part of a persecution of the memory of the Kushite kings under Psamtik II, which may have resulted in the loss of material relating to the events of 701 BC in Egyptian temples (author's photographs).
6. Jar sealing, with one seal-impression showing Shabako smiting an enemy before a [lost] Egyptian god, and another showing an Assyrian before an Assyrian god; 4.75cm x 3.18cm. From Nineveh; British Museum WA 84884 (© Trustees of the British Museum).